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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 004670

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SCUL](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: LIU XIAOBO'S WIFE COMPLAINS HUSBAND HELD
INCOMMUNICADO; CHARTER 08 ACCESSIBLE VIA INTERNET

REF: A. BEIJING 4493
[1](#)B. BEIJING 4501

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor
Aubrey Carlson. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) Liu Xia (protect), wife of detained rights activist Liu Xiaobo who was a key drafter of the "Charter 08" document calling for sweeping reforms in China (ref A), told PolOff December 23 that PRC authorities are detaining her husband "illegally" and that she has no channel for communicating with him. Liu Xia requests the U.S. Government continue to raise her husband's case with PRC officials in "private" meetings. In the meeting with PolOff, Liu Xia was accompanied by rights activist Jiang Qisheng (protect), himself a Charter 08 signer, who said the document urges reforms aimed at averting a "potential political crisis" that may be "many years away." Jiang said the Charter is reaching its intended audience, ordinary Chinese, largely via web-based instant messaging. Nearly one fourth of the 303 original Charter 08 signers have faced some form of harassment, Jiang said. End Summary.

LIU XIAOBO HELD INCOMMUNICADO

[1](#)2. (C) Liu Xia (protect), the wife of detained rights activist Liu Xiaobo, a key drafter of the "Charter 08" document (ref A), told PolOff December 23 that PRC authorities continue to detain her husband "illegally." Liu Xia complained that she has "absolutely no means" of communicating with her husband and does not know his location or condition. Liu Xia said she delivered a petition to Beijing's Public Security Bureau on December 18, in which she claims that Liu Xiaobo's detention violates Articles 64 and 96 of China's Criminal Procedure Law because authorities acted without a warrant, did not give notice to the family and have not afforded Liu Xiaobo access to legal counsel. Liu Xia said her land telephone line has been "turned off," though she can use a cell phone, and she is under "intermittent surveillance." Liu Xia said that she is "doing okay," but remains very concerned that she cannot communicate with her husband. Security officials are not presently posted outside her home, Liu Xia said, but they did prevent rights activist Yu Jie from visiting her home several days ago.

WIFE REQUESTS CONTINUED USG SUPPORT IN LIU'S CASE

[1](#)3. (C) Liu Xia requested that the U.S. Government continue to raise Liu Xiaobo's case, but only in "private" meetings with Chinese officials. Prominent rights activist Jiang Qisheng

(protect), who accompanied Liu Xia to her meeting with PolOff, emphasized the importance of raising Liu Xiaobo's case "repeatedly" but "behind the scenes" so as to "give Chinese leaders face." Liu Xia said rights attorney Mo Shaoping, who has agreed to defend Liu Xiaobo, advised her that it is especially important to raise Liu Xiaobo's case during the 37-day period following his December 8 detention, before procuratorate officials decide whether to approve the arrest. If they approve, Liu Xia said, they can continue to hold her husband.

CHARTER 08 REACHING CHINESE VIA INSTANT MESSAGING

14. (C) Jiang Qisheng told PolOff that the Charter 08 document urges reforms aimed at averting a potential "political crisis" that may still be "many years away." Jiang said he and other Charter 08 signers do not fear that China will quickly descend into chaos. On the other hand, Jiang complained that it is "too easy" for Chinese university professors to "sit in their comfortable offices and say everything is okay," when that is not the case either. The world financial crisis may make the necessity of implementing reforms more urgent, Jiang said, though it is "too early" to make a prediction about this. If there is a prolonged economic downturn, Jiang said, security forces could face "added pressure" next year during a host of anniversaries and key historical events, including the 90th anniversary of the "May Fourth movement" and the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen massacre.

15. (C) Jiang said Charter 08 is reaching its primary

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audience, ordinary Chinese, who "need to know about the views" expressed in the document. (NOTE: Jiang said Charter 08 signers also want the Government to take note of their effort, but that this is of "secondary importance.") More than 6,000 people have endorsed Charter 08, Jiang averred, including many "brave" persons who "have normal jobs and draw salaries" and who therefore would stand to lose much were the Government to retaliate against them. "We are not like Falun Gong," Jiang stated, "in that we insist that signers use their real names and only sign once." More important than the rising number of endorsements, Jiang said, is the spread of Charter 08 via the Internet. Chinese authorities can close individual web sites that carry the Charter, Jiang said, but authorities have failed to stanch the flow of information spreading through "QQ" instant messaging software and other similar channels. Jiang said he has used instant messaging to forward Charter 08 to "hundreds of people," many of whom have passed it along to others.

ONE FOURTH OF ORIGINAL CHARTER 08 SIGNERS HARASSED

16. (C) A group of "about seven people" took "primary responsibility" for drafting Charter 08, Jiang said, but that group then solicited suggestions from "many others." Liu Xia added that Liu Xiaobo, one of the primary drafters, spent evenings on his computer at home drafting and revising Charter 08 based on input from others. Of the 303 original signers, two (Liu Xiaobo and Zhang Zuhua) were detained, and about 70 have been "visited" by security officials. Zhang Zuhua was subsequently released. Jiang told PolOff that local public security officials "invited" him to "drink green tea" with them. They asked him why he had signed the Charter and other related questions "and then went off to file their report," Jiang stated. Jiang said they have not visited him a second time.

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